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Grilled Tandoori–Style Chicken with Cool Cucumber Raita

By News Canada

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by: News Canada

(NC)—Using a tandoori paste from a jar makes this spicy chicken dish fast and easy. Marinate the meat at the cottage in the morning, or combine the chicken and marinade and marinate overnight in the refrigerator before leaving for the cottage the next day. This marinade is also lovely for grilled lamb chops. You can make the raita at home and bring it along in the cooler.

Ingredients

2 lbs boneless, skinless chicken breasts, 1 kg
cut into lengthwise strips
2–3 tbsp tandoori paste (homemade or purchased) 25–45 mL
1/4 cup plain yogurt 50 mL
olive oil
RAITA:
1/2 large English cucumber, finely chopped
2 large Roma tomatoes, seeded and finely chopped
1/2 tsp salt 2 mL
1 cup plain yogurt, strained 250 mL
2 tbsp chopped cilantro 25 mL
1/4 tsp roasted cumin 1 mL
1 pepper 1

Procedure

Marinate chicken in a combination of tandoori paste and yogurt for several hours or overnight in refrigerator.

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Thread chicken accordion fashion on bamboo skewers that have been soaked in hot water for 30 minutes. Discard marinade. Preheat barbecue grill to 550° F. After pre–heating grill, adjust all burners to medium heat. Lightly brush each piece of chicken with olive oil then grill over direct medium heat for 8–10 minutes, just until chicken is cooked through.

To make raita, seed and finely chop the cucumber and tomato paste. Salt the vegetables and let stand for 30 minutes to remove some of the excess moisture. Line a mesh strainer with a coffee filter, set it over a bowl and drain the yogurt over the coffee filter and bowl in the refrigerator for 1–2 hours. Discard liquid and place the yogurt in a bowl. Drain the vegetables and add to the yogurt. Stir in the chopped cilantro and roasted cumin. Season with pepper to taste and refrigerate. Raita may be made up to two days ahead. Serve chicken immediately with lots of turmeric–scented basmati rice and some of the raita on the side.

Serves 4

Recipe courtesy of Weber–Stephen Products Co.

Easy Extras Store–bought frozen Naan bread Pappadums Cold Beer Lime pickle or hot mango chutney Jars of shelf–stable Raita Basmati Rice Cooling fresh fruit like: Mangoes, Bananas or Pineapple for dessert

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Tandoori Dishes

By Liz Canham

Grilled Tandoori–Style Chicken with Cool Cucumber Raita

Traditionally, tandoori dishes are cooked in a tandoor, an oval shaped clay oven with a small fire in the bottom. The heat rises gradually but ultimately reaches a much higher temperature than a barbeque.

A tandoor is normally used to cook naan bread, meats and kebabs (meat or paneer). The bread is stuck to the sides, the kebabs stood vertically and whole chickens rested on a grid over the fire.

For domestic cooking, a tandoor is not really convenient but the meat dishes can be reproduced on a barbeque or in the oven. The bright red appearance of tandoori meats which you may see in Indian restaurants is produced by a food dye which really isn't necessary to enhance the look of your tandoori dishes.

I have a great fondness for tandoori style food. It has flavour, without being "hot" or high in calories or too filling. In fact it's an ideal dish summer or winter, if you fancy something a little different. As a bonus, it doesn't take hours to prepare. Of course you can take all the effort out of it and use a pre-prepared mix, but I think they have less flavour and you can't use them for anything else, whereas if you use the individual spices, you can make other dishes as well.

You can easily make tandoori chicken (whole), tandoori lamb chops (pork would be more unusual, but there's no reason why you shouldn't use it, if you prefer) and lamb tikka (kebabs) but my personal favourite is chicken tikka because it's so quick so here's my own recipe.

This recipe serves two people – multiply it for as many people as you want.

Ingredients

- > 2 Chicken breasts
- >1 small tub Greek yogurt
- >1 tsp ground cumin
- >1 tsp ground coriander
- >½ tsp ground turmeric
- >½ tsp ginger powder
- >½ tsp chilli powder (or to taste)
- >1 small clove garlic, crushed
- >salt to taste
- >1 tbsp lemon juice

Cut the chicken breasts into 1 inch cubes and set aside. Mix the spice powders and garlic into the yogurt. You can use low fat yogurt if you prefer. You can also use fresh ginger or ginger paste from a jar rather than ginger powder but go easy on the quantity as it can be quite over-powering.

At this point you can also mix in the salt and lemon juice but if you do so, don't leave the chicken to marinade for more than about 20 minutes or it will become very dry when cooked. If you want to marinade it for a longer time, add the salt and lemon juice just before you cook the dish or sprinkle on to serve.

Grilled Tandoori–Style Chicken with Cool Cucumber Raita

Thread the chicken onto skewers and either barbeque or cook under a grill using medium heat until the chicken is slightly browned and cooked through.

For a light meal, serve with salad, pitta or naan bread and lemon wedges or for something more substantial with rice and dahl.

Liz Canham:

As well as a love of Asian cooking and travel as you can see in her

and

websites, Liz seeks to help newcomers to the world of internet marketing with tools,

tips and training from her

website.

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